



**Oregon Business Association-Associated Oregon Industries**

To: Chair Margaret Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

From: Joel Fischer, Senior Policy Analyst

Date: March 10, 2017

RE: HB 2845

Chair Margaret Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

The Oregon Business Association-Associated Oregon Industries (OBA-AOI) has a long history of supporting education funding and targeted investments focused on closing the achievement gap, increasing education outcomes, reducing chronic absenteeism and improving our graduation rate.

Oregon's graduation rate is 73.8 percent, the third worst in the nation, our rates of chronic absenteeism are some of the worst in the nation, and we have an achievement gap that continues to fail on the promise of a quality education for many low income and minority Oregonians.

In 2016 The Oregon Department of Education published a report on chronic absenteeism. One of their findings is that chronic absenteeism is a function of culturally responsive education practices. A key recommendation was to offer engaging curriculum.

We applaud the work of the Chair Doherty, Rep. Hernandez, Sen. Frederick, Rep. Parrish and other stakeholders to create this legislation that will develop statewide ethnic studies standards. Even if our education system was producing the outcomes we strive for, ethnic studies standards and curriculum have been missing from our education system. We hope that ethnic studies standards will have the added benefit of giving teachers, parents, and administrators the tools they need to begin increasing education outcomes, reducing chronic absenteeism, improving our high school graduation rate and delivering on the promise of a quality education for every student in Oregon.

OBA-AOI urges you to support HB 2845.

Joel Fischer

[joel@oba-online.org](mailto:joel@oba-online.org)

Senior Policy Analyst

Oregon Business Association